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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/667,434	09/22/2000	Marc Etienne Bonneville	AP628US	9404

7590 08/17/2006

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EXAMINER

MEI, XU

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2615

DATE MAILED: 08/17/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/667,434

Applicant(s)

BONNEVILLE, MARC ETIENNE

Examiner

Xu Mei

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 June 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24,30-32,38-55 and 65-75 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 2-24,30-32,38-55,65 and 68-75 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 66-67 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This communication is responsive to the applicant's response dated 06/14/2006.
2. Applicant's arguments, see Remark/Argument, filed 06/14/2006, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1, 66-67 under Noro in view of Lamb have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Curtis et al and Anderson et al.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1, 66-67 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Curtis et al (US-6,389,139, hereafter, Curtis) in view of Anderson et al (US-5,406,634, hereafter, Anderson).

Regarding Claim 1, Curtis discloses an apparatus comprising an audio distribution unit (Figs. 1 & 7, element 14) having means for providing audio signals from audio sources (6) and output ports for supplying sets of audio transducers (VC1-VCn),

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44), each said set comprising at least a first audio transducer and a second audio transducer (42 and 44), the first and second audio transducers are being connected to the audio distribution unit by a set of four conductors (12, 22, 24, 26), the apparatus further comprising means for supplying audio signals to each of the audio transducers by way of a respective pair of said four conductors (12, 24 and 12, 26) and transferring power and data signals (col. 18, lines 15-34) between said audio distribution unit, by way of at least two of said four conductor (power on 22 and 12 and audio data on 24 and 26).

What's not taught by Curtis is at least one remote unit is being associated with the first and second audio transducers for controlling the audio distribution unit.

Anderson discloses an intelligent speaker unit of an audio distribution network (see Fig. 2) that including an external control unit or remote unit (41) associated with a speaker system (22) for controlling an audio distribution unit (i.e., DSP) by means of digital data signals (see also col. 5, lines 1-11). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the apparatus of Curtis by including an external control unit or remote unit as taught by Anderson in order to provide a remote control means for adjusting the audio distribution system from every remote location rather than a fixed point for more versatility and user friendly in audio signals distribution selection and audio signal control.

Regarding claim 66, the combinations of Curtis and Anderson discloses an audio distribution apparatus as stated apropos of claim 1 above but does not disclose the external control unit or remote unit having an infrared receiver means and transmitting

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means for receiving and transmitting an infrared control signal. However, it is old and well known in the art that wireless remote control is being used and having an infrared receiver means and transmitting means for receiving and transmitting an infrared control signal. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to utilize the old and well known wireless remote control for the external control unit or remote unit as taught by Anderson in order to have the advantage of wireless and versatile control by the user for the audio distribution apparatus.

Regarding Claim 67, Curtis further discloses voice circuitry for converting signals from a microphone into voice signals for transmission to the audio distribution unit and to the transducer units (Col. 5, line 67).

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 2-24, 30-32, 38-55, 65, 68-75 are allowed.
6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Tijima and Washikawa et al are made of record here as pertinent art to the claimed invention. They both disclose audio processing and control apparatus.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Xu Mei whose telephone number is 571-272-7523. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (9:30-6:00).

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vivian Chin can be reached on 571-272-7848. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Xu Mei', with a small number '2' written above it.

Xu Mei
Primary Examiner
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08/09/2006